

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 7, 17, 20-22, 25-31, 34, 35, 37 and 41 as set forth below:

1. (Currently Amended) [[A]] An automated method of processing trade documents associated with a trade operation between a buyer and a seller, wherein the method is executed by a programmed computer processor which communicates with the buyer and seller via a network, the method comprising the computer-performed steps of:

maintaining a customer profile containing: ~~standard~~ (1) letter of credit templates, (2) letter of credit text, and (3) terms and conditions used by the buyer that are approved for transactions involving the buyer and seller;

receiving from the buyer an initiation document containing requirement information with respect to the trade operation, wherein the initiation document is received via the network and comprises: (1) a purchase order by itself, or (2) a purchase and an application for a letter of credit;

mapping at least some of the requirement information ~~[[into]]~~ in a database using the computer processor to enable tracking and monitoring of the status of the trade operation;

generating a letter of credit using the computer processor if the initiation document is a purchase order ~~[[or]]~~ and an application for a letter of credit, wherein the letter of credit is generated based on the requirement information and the customer profile;

generating ~~[[the]]~~ at least one trade document ~~documents~~ required by the trade operation utilizing the requirement information contained in the letter of credit; and

verifying the accuracy of the at least one trade document ~~documents~~ ~~throughout the trade operation~~ by comparing the at least one trade document to the customer profile using the computer processor.

2. (Canceled)

3 (Canceled) The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of receiving the initiation document further comprises the step of receiving the initiation document electronically.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of manually repairing the Letter of Credit if there is a discrepancy between the requirement information contained in the database and the standard terms and conditions contained in the customer profile.

7. (**Currently Amended**) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

issuing the Letter of Credit using the computer processor; and
advising the seller of the issuance of the Letter of Credit.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)

15. (Canceled)

16. (Canceled)

17. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of generating a sales order using the computer processor in response to the initiation document.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Canceled)

20. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 17, further comprising the steps of:

comparing the sales order to the requirement information contained in the database using the computer processor in order to determine any discrepancies; and

correcting the sales order using the computer processor if there are any discrepancies, thereby generating a matched sales order.

21. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 20, further comprising the steps of:

generating a manufacturing specification sheet ~~using~~ based on the sales order using the computer processor;

comparing the manufacturing specification sheet to the matched sales order using the computer processor in order to determine any discrepancies; and

correcting the manufacturing specification sheet using the computer processor if there are any discrepancies, thereby generating a matched manufacturing specification sheet.

22. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 20, further comprising the steps of:

automatically generating shipping instructions ~~using~~ based on the matched sales order using the computer processor; and

transmitting the shipping instructions to a shipper.

23. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 22, wherein the shipping instructions are a draft bill of lading.

24. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 22, wherein the step of transmitting the shipping instruction to the shipper further comprises the step of electronically transmitting the shipping instructions.

25. (**Currently Amended**) The method as recited in claim 20, further comprising the step of generating an invoice using the computer processor.

26. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 25, wherein the step of generating the invoice further comprises the step of automatically generating the invoice using the matched sales order.

27. (**Currently Amended**) The method as recited in claim 25, further comprising the steps of:

comparing the invoice to the matched sales order using the computer processor in order to determine any discrepancies; and

correcting the invoice using the computer processor if there are any discrepancies, thereby generating a matched invoice.

28. (**Currently Amended**) The method as recited in claim 27, further comprising the steps of:

receiving shipping instructions from a shipper via the network;

comparing the shipping instructions to the matched invoice using the computer processor in order to determine any discrepancies; and

informing the shipper of the discrepancies whereby the shipper can correct the discrepancies and provide matched shipping instructions.

29. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 27, further comprising the steps of:

automatically generating shipping insurance instructions ~~using~~ based on the matched invoice using the computer processor; and

transmitting the shipping insurance instructions to an insurer.

30. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 29, further comprising the steps of:

receiving a certificate of insurance from the insurer; and

automatically generating at least one [[the]] trade document ~~documents~~ using the certificate of insurance, the matched invoice and the matched shipping instructions.

31. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 28, further comprising the step of automatically generating at least one [[the]] trade document ~~documents~~ using based on the matched invoice and the matched shipping instructions using the computer processor.

32. (Canceled)

33. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 30, wherein the trade documents include the matched invoice, the matched shipping instructions, the certificate of insurance, packing slips, and a certificate of analysis.

34. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 30, further comprising the step of presenting the trade documents to the buyer for negotiation via the network.

35. **(Currently Amended)** The method as recited in claim 33, further comprising the step of performing a reconciliation function on behalf of the buyer using the computer processor.

36. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 34, wherein the step of performing a reconciliation function on behalf of the buyer further comprises the step of reconciling a payment due under the trade documents against the requirement information.

37. (**Currently Amended**) The method as recited in claim 33, further comprising the steps of:

receiving payment information reflecting a payment made by the buyer, the seller via the network; and

performing a reconciliation function on behalf of the seller in response to the payment information using the computer processor.

38. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 36, wherein the step of performing a reconciliation function on behalf of the seller further comprises the step of reconciling the payment information against the matched invoice.

39. (Canceled)

40. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 38, further comprising the step printing the documents at a location which is in proximity to the bank.

41. (**Currently Amended**) The method as recited in claim 39, wherein the trade documents are presented to the bank electronically via the network.

42. (Canceled).

43. (Canceled).

44. (Canceled).

45. (Canceled).

46. (Canceled).

47. (Canceled).

- 48. (Canceled).
- 49. (Canceled).
- 50. (Canceled).
- 51. (Canceled).
- 52. (Canceled).
- 53. (Canceled).
- 54. (Canceled).
- 55. (Canceled).
- 56. (Canceled).
- 57. (Canceled).
- 58. (Canceled).
- 59. (Canceled).
- 60. (Canceled).
- 61. (Canceled).
- 62. (Canceled).
- 63. (Canceled).